



Office of
the Schools
Adjudicator

**LOCAL AUTHORITY REPORT
TO
THE SCHOOLS ADJUDICATOR
FROM
WANDSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

30 JUNE 2017

**Report Cleared by: Liz Rayment-Pickard
Assistant Director - Education, Performance & Planning**

Date submitted: 1 August 2017

**By (Name & Title): Adam Wells
Head of Pupil Services**

Email address: awells@wasndsworth.gov.uk

Telephone number: 020 8871 8028

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/office-of-the-schools-adjudicator

Please email your completed report to: osa.team@osa.gsi.gov.uk

Introduction

Section 88P of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 (the Act) requires every local authority to make an annual report to the adjudicator. The Chief Schools Adjudicator (CA) then includes a summary of these reports in her annual report to the Secretary for State for Education. The School Admissions Code (the Code) sets out the requirements for reports by local authorities in paragraph 6. Paragraph 3.23 specifies what must be included as a minimum in the report to the adjudicator and makes provision for the local authority to include any other issues. The report **must** be returned to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator by **30 June 2017**.

The questions have been revised for 2017 with the purpose of:

- a) making the information gathered statistically robust and as useful as possible to the local authorities which provide the information; that is: the Office of the Schools Adjudicator (OSA) which receives the information; the Department for Education (DfE) to which the CA provides her annual report; and the children and families for whom the Code is designed to make sure that places are allocated and offered in an open and fair way;
- b) minimising the work required by local authorities in providing information; and
- c) avoiding duplication of effort.

This revised format therefore, in addition to statutory requirements as described in the Code, explores: points raised by local authorities in previous reports and matters which have arisen in the CA's Annual Report and areas of interest to the DfE. If information is already collected elsewhere, such as the number and type of schools and data relating to appeals, then it is not asked for again here but will be available for inclusion in the CA's Annual Report.

Information requested

1. LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND PREVIOUSLY LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

It is a requirement of the Code that there is information in the local authority's annual report about how admission arrangements in the area of the local authority serve the interests of looked after children and previously looked after children.

- a. How well do admission arrangements in your local authority area serve the interests of looked after children?

Not at all Not well Well Very well

- b. How well do the admission arrangements in other local authority areas serve the interests of your looked after children?

Not at all Not well Well Very well

- c. How well do admission arrangements in your local authority area serve the interests of previously looked after children?

Not at all Not well Well Very well

Please give examples of good or bad practice or difficulties which support your answer and provide any suggestions for improvement:

As required by the Admissions Code, looked after children and previous looked after children have first priority in the published admission criteria of maintained schools and academies. In the main managed rounds (Reception and Secondary Transfer), this has served the interests of LAC and previous LAC very well. Generally, this has also been the case for in year admissions but in a small number isolated cases it has taken longer than desired to secure admission of such children who have previously demonstrated very challenging behaviour.

2. CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES AND CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

It is a requirement of the Code that there is information in the local authority's annual report about how admission arrangements in the area of the local authority serve the interests of children with children with disabilities and children with special educational needs.

- a. How well served are children who have disabilities and/or special educational needs who have an education health and care plan or a statement of special educational needs that names a school?

Not at all Not well Well Very well

- b. How well served are children who have disabilities and/or special educational needs who do not have an education health and care plan or a statement of special educational needs?

Not at all Not well Well Very well

Please give examples of good or bad practice or difficulties which support your answer and provide any suggestions for improvement.

Pupils with an EHCP or statement of SEN are not considered under the mainstream admissions process and are covered by separate legislation. Six of Wandsworth's seven special schools are judged outstanding or good by Ofsted. There are also 18 resource bases, meaning that overall children are extremely well served in terms of admissions options. Mainstream schools and standalone academies accept statemented children readily where they can demonstrably meet their needs but there are some difficulties placing children in academies run by larger chains.

For children who have disabilities and/or special educational needs but who do not have an education health and care plan or a statement of special educational needs, most admission authorities have an exceptional social/medical need criterion if there is an exceptional need to attend a particular school.

3. CONSULTATION

Paragraph 1.44 of the Code states who needs to be consulted if consultation on admission arrangements is required. The CA has noted that these requirements are not always fulfilled in the arrangements which come to the attention of the OSA and, in particular, consultation with parents is not always as full as it should be. The OSA therefore wishes to get a better understanding of the wider situation and provide examples of good practice.

- a. When did the local authority last consult on its arrangements?

Please provide the year.

In 2016-17 in relation to a reduction in PAN for one school from 2018

In 2014-15 in relation to a change in the sibling criterion for community schools.

- b. Please describe the means by which the local authority consulted with parents. Highlight all those means used:

- Committee paper on the local authority's proposals on admissions on the council's website.
- Consultation paper designed for parents on the local authority's proposals on admissions on council's website.
- Request to all schools to provide information on the local authority's consultation on its admission arrangements to parents and providing support to make this possible such as posters, leaflets and links to the relevant information on council's website for the schools' newsletters.
- Request to all early years settings to make information on the local authority's consultation available to parents by providing support to make this possible such as posters, leaflets and links to the relevant information on the council's website for the settings' newsletters.
- Social media (please provide some detail).

Announcements made on Twitter and Facebook announcing consultation and deadline for responses. Consultation also publicised through popular local online parent forums, eg NappyValley.Net

- Adverts in local press.
- Articles in local press.
- Posters in supermarkets, doctors' surgeries, early years health centres and similar

Other (please specify)

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How confident are you that other admission authorities in your area are consulting parents properly as required by paragraph 1.44a of the Code?	Not at all confident	Many concerns	Few concerns	Completely confident
c. Voluntary aided			X	
d. Foundation			X	
e. Academy			X	
f. Free			X	
g. UTC	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
h. Studio	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Please give examples of good practice by schools that are their own admission authority. Examples of good practice in consulting with parents whose children are under compulsory school age will be particularly welcome.

LA guidance on the consultation and determination process is issued annually to all own admission authority schools. This highlights to need to consult parents whose children are under compulsory school age. Depending on interpretation of the Code, this can be a difficult requirement to meet fully.

Examples of good practice within Wandsworth schools have been:

- **Posting leaflets in local streets of affected schools;**
- **For church schools, publicising the consultation within the local religious community via church newsletters and posters within the church/church hall.**

4. PUPIL, SERVICE AND EARLY YEARS PUPIL PREMIUMS

Has your local authority consulted for admissions in 2018 on using any of the pupil premiums as an oversubscription criterion in community or voluntary controlled schools?	For entry to reception year	For entry to year 7
a. Pupil premium	No	No
b. Service premium	No	No
c. Early years premium	No	N/A

d. If the local authority consulted on any of the pupil premiums please provide a summary of the responses received:

e. If you did not consult on introducing the **pupil premium** please indicate up to three main reasons for not doing so:

- Unsure how it will help social mobility;
- Unsure how it will reduce educational inequality;
- Could displace children living locally to a school;
- Potential transport cost to local authority for local children displaced;

- Some very disadvantaged families do not apply for free school meals and so would be further disadvantaged;
- Feel community needs already well met;
- Would introduce unnecessary complication;
- Lack of capacity; or
- i. Other (please explain):

f. If you did not consult on introducing the **service premium** please indicate up to three main reason for not doing so:

- Unsure how it will help social mobility;
- Unsure how it will reduce educational inequality;
- Could displace children living locally to a school;
- Potential transport cost to local authority for local children who might be prevented from being offered a place at their local school;
- Would introduce unnecessary complication;
- Lack of capacity; or
- Other (please explain):

It is felt however that the provision within paragraph 2.18 of the Code are sufficient to address any disadvantage without the need to give additional priority to such applicants at the expense of more local families

g. If you did not consult on introducing **early years premium** please indicate up to three main reasons for not doing so:

- Application of early years' pupil premium priority for those attending a nursery at the school could unfairly disadvantage those who did not choose to use the nursery at the school;
- Application of early years' pupil premium priority for those attending a nursery at the school could affect the sustainability of other early years' provision;
- Unsure how it will help social mobility;
- Unsure how it will reduce educational inequality;
- Could displace children living locally to a school;
- Potential transport cost to local authority for local children who might be prevented from being offered a place at their local school;
- Some very disadvantaged families do not apply for free school meals and so would be further disadvantaged;
- Feel community needs already well met;
- Would introduce unnecessary complication;
- Lack of capacity; or
- Other (please explain):

How many community or voluntary controlled schools in the local authority area will use pupil premium as an oversubscription criterion for admissions in 2018?	Primary including middle deemed primary	Secondary including middle deemed secondary
h. Pupil premium	0	0
i. Service premium	0	0
j. Early years pupil premium	0	N/A

How many own admission authority schools consulted you on the use of a pupil premium oversubscription criterion for admissions in 2018?	Primary including middle deemed primary			Secondary including middle deemed secondary	
	Early years	Pupil	Service	Pupil	Service
k. Voluntary aided	0	1	0	0	0
l. Foundation	0	0	0	0	0
m. Academy	0	0	0	0	0
n. Free	0	0	0	0	0
o. UTC	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0
p. Studio	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0

How many own admission authority schools in your area will use one of the premiums as an oversubscription criterion for 2018?	Primary including middle deemed primary			Secondary including middle deemed secondary	
	Early years	Pupil	Service	Pupil	Service
q. Voluntary aided	0	1	0	0	0
r. Foundation	0	0	0	0	0
s. Academy	0	0	0	0	0
t. Free	0	0	0	0	0
u. UTC	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0
v. Studio	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	0

<p>w. Do you have any further comments with regards to the pupil premiums in addition to the above?</p> <p>None</p>
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5. DETERMINED ARRANGEMENTS

The OSA has noted that some admission authorities have not determined their arrangements as required by the Code and so seeks further information on this. Paragraph 3.2 of the Code requires local authorities to refer admission arrangements determined by other admission authorities to the Schools Adjudicator if they are of the view that they are unlawful.

- a. On which date did your local authority determine its arrangements for admissions in 2018?

13 February 2017

- b. When were the determined arrangements published on the local authority's website?

14 February 2017

How many sets of admission arrangements of schools that are their own admission authority were queried directly by your local authority because they were considered not to comply with the Code?	Primary including middle deemed primary	Secondary including middle deemed secondary
c. Voluntary aided	5	0
d. Foundation	0	0
e. Academy	1	1
f. Free	0	0
g. UTC	N/A	0
h. Studio	N/A	0
<p>i. Overall, in your consideration of the admission arrangements for 2018 determined by other admission authorities, which paragraphs of the Code gave you greatest concern because of possible non-compliance with requirements?</p> <p>No overriding factors although it can sometimes be difficult to reconcile the requirements of paragraph 1.8 to paragraphs 1.36-1.38. Also, the LA is not necessarily privy to advice offered by religious authorities under paragraph 1.38.</p> <p>Despite annual guidance and reminders, a small number of own admission authorities schools fail to provide their determined admission arrangements by the required date.</p>		

- j. Further comment: please provide any examples or views regarding the determination of admission arrangements that have not been covered above

No further comment

6. CO-ORDINATION

How well did co-ordination of the main admissions round work?	Not well	A large number of small problems or a major problem	Well with few small problems	Very well
a. Reception				X
b. Year 7				X
c. Other relevant years of entry (please specify) Year 3				X
<p>d. Please give examples to illustrate your answer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A simpler system for parents to understand 				

- Common closing dates and offer date
- One form/online application
- One offer of school place on National Offer Day thereby increasing offer of preferred school to more families
- LA Admissions Team as main point of contact.
- **Close partnership working with all state funded schools and the LA**
 - Co-operation of all schools
 - Open accountability for own admission authority schools including quality assurance of ranked application lists
 - LA continues to administer waiting lists from NOD to 31 August with school input where necessary eg faith or medical/social applications.
- **Inter LA working**
 - A prime example of close working between LAs on a regional basis leading to the development of the Pan London Admissions Hub and London Admissions Portal.

e. There has been an increase in the number of schools for which the governing body or academy trust is the admission authority. Please describe the effect of this on the admissions system in your area.

Within Wandsworth, we have had the full cooperation of own admission authority schools for the coordination of the main managed rounds. All schools also participate in varying degrees to in year coordination. It remains a concern, particularly from safeguarding perspective, that in year coordination is not statutory and therefore own admission authority schools can potentially opt out.

To how many schools of each type does the local authority delegate responsibility for in-year admissions?	Primary including middle deemed primary	Secondary including middle deemed secondary
f. Community	0	0
g. Voluntary controlled	N/A	N/A
h. What do you consider to be the advantages and disadvantages of this?		
The LA retains its role as admission authority for all community schools for in year admissions on an operational basis. See below for general comments about in year coordination.		

For how many schools of each type does the local authority co-ordinate in-year admissions?	Primary including middle deemed primary	Secondary including middle deemed secondary
i. Voluntary aided	18	1
j. Foundation	5	0
k. Academy	4	7
l. Free	3	1
m. UTC	N/A	N/A
n. Studio	N/A	N/A

o. What do you consider to be the advantages and disadvantages of this?

Wandsworth continues to operate a centralised application system so parents need only make one application. Where it is not possible to offer a preferred school, applicants will be offered an alternative school or advised of schools with vacancies as appropriate.

This has been effective in seeking to ensure that all children changing schools or moving into the area can secure a school place. Following on from statutory co-ordination, it has enabled the monitoring and tracking of applications in order to safeguard pupils at a time when they can be most vulnerable to missing education.

7. Appeals

Information on the number of appeals lodged and the proportion upheld is collected separately so this information is not requested again. The information requested below is to add to that information.

	a. How many schools of each type engage the local authority to provide all aspects of the appeals process?		b. How many schools of each type engage the local authority to provide some aspects of the appeals process?	
	Primary including middle deemed primary	Secondary including middle deemed secondary	Primary including middle deemed primary	Secondary including middle deemed secondary
Voluntary aided	16	1	0	0
Foundation	3	0	0	0
Academy	2	4	0	0
Free	2	1	0	0
Studio	N/A	0	N/A	0
UTC	N/A	0	N/A	0

c. Any comments related to this:

Wandsworth Education Appeals Service provides an appeals service for maintained schools and academies within Wandsworth. This is highly effective in providing a high quality service to schools and parents alike. All bar two oversubscribed own admission authority schools/academies sign up to the service.

d. How confident are you that admission appeals for schools which are their own admission authorities meet the requirements of the School Admission Appeals Code?

Not at all confident many doubts a few doubts Confident

e. Please describe your areas of concern, if any:

Two oversubscribed OAA schools (both church schools) administer their own appeals. There have been no concerns in relation to these schools. We have received no complaints from parents. Both schools have contacted the LA and/or

diocesan authority for advice where necessary.

8. FAIR ACCESS PROTOCOL

- a. Do you have a Fair Access Protocol agreed with the majority of state-funded mainstream schools in your area?

Yes No

- b. If no, please explain why:

N/A

- c. How many children have been admitted or refused admission under the Fair Access Protocol to each type of school in your area?

Type of School	Number of children admitted		Number of children refused admission	
	Primary aged child	Secondary aged child	Primary aged children	Secondary aged children
Community	0	41	N/A	0
Voluntary controlled	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Voluntary aided	0	11	N/A	0
Foundation	0	N/A	N/A	0
Academy	0	39	N/A	0
Free	0	3	N/A	0
UTC	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Studio	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

- d. How well do you consider hard to place children are served by the Fair Access Protocol in your area?

Not at all Not well Well Very well

- e. Please explain your answer giving examples of good and bad practice; successes and difficulties as appropriate.

The protocol has been successful in enabling the placement of a number of 'hard to place' children in maintained secondary schools and academies. Schools have worked well within the LA to implement the protocol. The Council also has specific programmes set up with schools for pupils moving into the area in Year 11 and pupils entering the UK from abroad where English is an additional language.

The LA is currently reviewing its Primary Fair Access Protocol to make this more effective to ensure hard to place pupils are quickly placed and fairly distributed amongst schools.

9. DIRECTIONS

How many directions did the local authority make between 31 March 2016 and 31 March 2017 for children in the local authority area?

	Primary aged children (not looked after)	Primary aged looked after children	Secondary aged children (not looked after)	Secondary aged looked after children
a. Voluntary aided	0	0	0	0
b. Foundation	0	0	0	0

c. Please add any comment with regard to strengths or difficulties relating to this.

The LA will only use direction as a last resort once all other avenues have been exhausted. It is a strength of the local admissions system and the partnership with schools that this has rarely been necessary in recent years. No schools were directed to admit pupils through the mainstream admissions process although two pupils with an EHCP were admitted following direction.

How many directions did the local authority make between 31 March 2016 and 31 March 2017 for looked after children in another local authority area?

	For primary aged child	For secondary aged child
d. Community	0	0
e. Voluntary controlled	0	0
f. Voluntary aided	0	0
g. Foundation	0	0

h. Please add any comment with regard to strengths or difficulties relating to this.

N/A

How many requests for directions did the local authority make to the EFA between 31 March 2016 and 31 March 2017?

	For primary aged children (not looked after)	For primary aged looked after children	For secondary aged children (not looked after)	For secondary aged looked after children
i. Academy	0	0	0	0
j. Free	0	0	0	0
k. Studio	N/A	N/A	0	0
l. UTC	N/A	N/A	0	0

m. Please add any comment with regard to strengths or difficulties relating to this.

N/A

10. OTHER MATTERS

Are there any other matters that the local authority would like to raise that have not been covered by the questions above?

None

Thank you for completing this template.

Please return to Lisa Short at OSA.Team@osa.gsi.gov.uk by 30 June 2017